DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 117 096 SP 009 797

TITLE	The West Dallas Teacher Education Program.
INSTITUTION	North Texas State Univ., Denton.
PUB DATE	Nov 75
NOTE	9p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS	*Field Experience Programs; Higher Education; Inner City; Performance Based Teacher Education; *Preservice Education; *Student Teaching; *Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Distinguished Achievement Awards Entry

ABSTRACT

The West Dallas Teacher Education Program is a competency-based program to better prepare teachers for service in inner-city schools. The program utilizes a field-based, professional semester format to directly relate didactic instruction and clinical practice. The project is staffed by three North Texas State University faculty members. Approximately 40 teacher education candidates volunteer each semester for this alternative to the traditional teacher preparation program. The project is housed in three secondary schools in Dallas' inner city. During the first eight weeks of the semester, participant students teach half a day and attend instructional seminars at the headquarters school the other half a day. The final eight weeks of the semester are spent entirely in student teaching, thus giving these preservice teachers 50 percent more student teaching than received by their counterparts in the traditional program on campus. University professors are on site throughout the semester to provide structure to the clinical experiences. (Author/BD)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED117096

DEC 3 1975

1976 Distinguished Achievement Awards Program

ENTRY SUBMITTED BY:

North Texas State University
Dr. C. C. Nolen, President

ON BEHALF OF

The West Dallas Teacher Education Program

AND

Dr. Richard Simms, Director
Dr. David Boger
Dr. Gerald Ponder
Dr. Reginald Hinely
Dr. Harold Sunderman

TRANSMITTED BY

John J. Horvat, Dean and
Chief Institutional Representative to AACTE

November, 1975

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

SP009707

PART I--NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY'S WEST DALLAS TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM - SUMMARY STATEMENT

In September, 1972, NTSU's Division of Teacher Education began implementation of a competency-based program to better prepare teachers for service in inner-city schools. The West Dallas Teacher Education Program (WDTEP) utilizes a field-based, professional semester format to directly relate didactic instruction and clinical practice. The project is staffed by three NTSU faculty members. Approximately forty teacher education candidates volunteer each semester for this alternative to the traditional teacher preparation program.

The project is housed in three secondary schools in Dallas' inner city. During the first eight weeks of the semester, participants student teach half a day and attend instructional seminars at the headquarters school the other half a day. The final eight weeks of the semester are spent entirely in student teaching, thus giving these pre-service teachers fifty per cent more student teaching than received by their counterparts in the traditional program on campus. University professors are on site throughout the semester to provide structure to the clinical experiences.

During its first three years of operation, the WDTEP has trained more than 240 teachers for successful teaching in the inner-city. The Dallas Independent School District (and other urban school districts) has given high priority to these young teachers for vacancies in its secondary schools--an indication of that district's strong commitment to this highly successful program.

PART II--THE WEST DALLAS TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM
COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT

Description and Development of the Program

A charge consistently leveled at colleges of education is that their pre-service courses are too theoretical and unrealistic. The professor of education is normally put in the position of attempting to present solutions in class to problems which the pre-service teacher has not yet faced (and may not face for another year or two). This "traditional approach" to teacher education is far from ideal and a number of alternatives are being developed.

With all its shortcomings, the pre-service teacher education program found in the typical university does a fair job of preparing teachers for service in middle-class schools. However, in terms of preparing teachers who can be successful in inner-city schools, teacher educators have failed miserably. All too often, the first year teacher who is assigned to a "tough" urban school discovers that he simply cannot cope with what he finds there. If he "sticks it out," it is only with extreme effort on his part. Often he must settle for "keeping school" instead of "teaching."

The West Dallas Teacher Education Program (WDTEP) is an attempt to move pre-service teacher education from the realm of isolated didactic instruction toward more realistic clinical approaches through the use of a professional semester format. The program focuses on preparing teachers to be successful teachers in inner-city schools. This program, sponsored jointly by North Texas State University and the Dallas Independent Schools,

began with the fall semester of 1972.

The entire WDTEP is housed "on site" in the shadow of downtown Dallas in three secondary schools. One high school and two middle schools enroll more than 5,000 students. The three schools are located within a four square block area. Such enrollment in this small area indicates the population density of the public housing project adjacent to which the schools are located. The racial makeup of the three schools is approximately 78 per cent black, 20 per cent brown, and 2 per cent white.

Prior to joining the program, participants have taken only the introductory education course. During their semester in the program, students earn the remaining fifteen semester hours of professional education course credit required for teacher certification. At the beginning of the semester, each program participant is assigned to a public school "cooperating teacher" for student teaching. The student teaches during the morning hours and works with his university professors in instructional seminars in the afternoons in classrooms furnished for the program at the high school. These seminars continue for the first eight weeks and replace the required education courses taught on campus. Seminars are competency-based and focus on the solution of problems identified by the student teachers as they work with secondary school students in the classroom. Competencies are developed through the use of a wide variety of activities including demonstrations, micro-teaching, role-playing, lectures, laboratory sessions, writing exercises, and field trips. A "walk the block" program is used to acquaint the student teachers with the community and its residents. Additionally, all student teachers work

in a West Dallas community center after school hours as volunteers in order to have informal contact with their students outside of school.

After the first two months of the semester, the student's competencies are evaluated and he is assigned tentative grades for the course-work portion of his fifteen semester hours. If he is not satisfied with his grades, the student may re-study the areas in which he performed poorly and take alternative forms of the tests to attempt to raise his grades. At this midpoint in the semester, the afternoon seminars are discontinued and students begin student teaching the entire day. During the second half of the semester university professors and cooperating teachers work directly with student teachers on a daily basis.

Program Objectives

1. To provide competency-based teacher education designed to prepare teachers for successful teaching in the inner-city.
2. To reduce the gap between didactic instruction and clinical instruction by integrating the two in a field-based, professional semester approach.
3. To provide pre-service teachers with depth level experiences in working with students in schools as well as in community settings.
4. To improve the teacher preparation program by means of full involvement of public school personnel as teacher education team members.

Personnel Involved

During the first three years of operation, the program has prepared approximately forty pre-service teachers each semester. Most of these students are seniors, though some already have degrees and are working

teacher certification. All are volunteers. The program staff considers this crucial because of its firm belief that the problems of inner-city schools will be solved only when those schools are staffed by teachers who want to teach there.

Likewise, the three university professors who make up the staff are also volunteers who were not satisfied with traditional, on-campus approaches to teacher education and who felt an urgency to provide special preparation for inner-city teachers. Each professor has a three-quarters assignment to the program and one-quarter assignment teaching an on-campus graduate class at night. One staff member is designated program head and coordinates all facets of the program. Each professor is responsible for liason with the principal and cooperating teachers in one of the three schools as well as supervision of student teachers in his school. The three staff members team teach the instructional seminars.

Budget

Resources for the operation of the WDTEP come directly from the regular operating budget of the College of Education. The Dean of the College has provided financial as well as professional support in the implementation of program goals and objectives.

The Dallas Independent School District contributes classroom facilities for seminars, audio-visual equipment, and offices and phones for the program staff. The principals and teachers in the three target schools have been very helpful and cooperative, and occasionally assist with the instructional seminars.

Contribution to the Improvement of Teacher Education

The WDTEP contributes to the improvement of teacher education in the following ways:

1. It clearly defines the goals and objectives of the teacher education program, and then identifies the competencies that program participants must possess in order to accomplish these goals. (This is considered an essential element in an age of educational accountability).
2. It provides for a well-trained, qualified teacher who is especially equipped for successful teaching in educationally disadvantaged inner-city schools.
3. It provides a more clinically oriented, less sterile, pre-service teacher education training experience than is available in traditional university campus-based teacher preparation programs.

Program Evaluation

The WDTEP has undergone continual evaluation since its inception in 1972:

1. Student teachers are administered a variety of standardized tests at the beginning and end of each semester to measure changes in attitude toward self, students, teachers, professional education, and the teaching profession.
2. Student teachers are given performance tests throughout the semester to measure their attainment of the required competencies.
3. Teaching performance is evaluated by university professors and

cooperating teachers periodically throughout the semester with a final evaluation at semester's end.

4. The program is formally evaluated by student teachers, cooperating teachers, principals, and professors at the end of each semester. This includes listing strengths as well as areas in need of improvement.
5. The most telling evaluation is seen in the number of program graduates who obtain teaching positions in today's tight job market. The Dallas Independent School District gives program graduates priority for vacancies they have. These young teachers are also sought after by other large, urban school districts. Most obtain teaching positions and perform in an outstanding manner in these positions.

Conclusion

The major problems facing education today seem to revolve around teaching the culturally different. Beginning teachers are increasingly being assigned to teach in the inner-city. Student teachers who "make it" in inner-city teacher education programs such as the WDTEP are much better prepared to teach successfully in any setting than are their traditionally trained counterparts. After three full years of operation, this program is now a permanent, ongoing alternative at North Texas State University to the traditional teacher education program on campus. Our only regret is that funds are not available to involve all of our students in this or similar programs.